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ABSTRACT

This fifth in a series of ten learning modules on school-community relations is designed to give secondary and postsecondary vocational teachers help in developing the skills needed to prepare news releases and articles for publication. The terminal objective for the module is to prepare news releases and articles concerning a vocational program in an actual school situation. Introductory sections relate the competencies dealt with here to others in the program and list both the enabling objectives for the four learning experiences and the resources required. Materials in the learning experiences include required reading, a self-check quiz, model answers, a news release checklist, guidelines for manuscript preparation, article checklist, and the teacher performance assessment form for use in evaluation of the terminal objective. (The modules on school-community relations are part of a larger series of 100 performance-based teacher education (PBTE) self-contained learning packages for use in preservice or inservice training of teachers in all occupational areas. Each of the field-tested modules focuses on the development of one or more specific professional competencies identified through research as important to vocational teachers. Materials are designed for use by teachers, either on an individual or group basis, working under the direction of one or more resource persons/instructors.) (BM)

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ED154213

MODULE

G-5

Prepare News Releases and Articles Concerning Your Vocational Program

MODULE G-5 OF CATEGORY G—SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROFESSIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION MODULE SERIES

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CE 016 057

FOREWORD

This module is one of a series of 100 performance-based teacher education (PBTE) learning packages focusing upon specific professional competencies of vocational teachers. The competencies upon which these modules are based were identified and verified through research as being important to successful vocational teaching at both the secondary and post-secondary levels of instruction. The modules are suitable for the preparation of teachers in all occupational areas.

Each module provides learning experiences that integrate theory and application; each culminates with criterion referenced assessment of the teacher's performance of the specified competency. The materials are designed for use by individual or groups of teachers in training working under the direction and with the assistance of teacher educators acting as resource persons. Resource persons should be skilled in the teacher competency being developed and should be thoroughly oriented to PBTE concepts and procedures in using these materials.

The design of the materials provides considerable flexibility for planning and conducting performance-based preservice and inservice teacher preparation programs to meet a wide variety of individual needs and interests. The materials are intended for use by universities and colleges, state departments of education, post-secondary institutions, local education agencies, and others responsible for the professional development of vocational teachers. Further information about the use of the modules in teacher education programs is contained in three related documents: **Student Guide to Using Performance-Based Teacher Education Materials, Resource Person Guide to Using Performance-Based Teacher Education Materials** and **Guide to Implementation of Performance-Based Teacher Education.**

The PBTE curriculum packages are products of a sustained research and development effort by The Center's Program for Professional Development for Vocational Education. Many individuals, institutions, and agencies participated with The Center and have made contributions to the systematic development, testing, revision, and refinement of these very significant training materials. Over 40 teacher educators provided input in development of initial versions of the modules; over 2,000 teachers and 300 resource persons in 20 universities, colleges, and post-secondary institutions used the materials and provided feedback to The Center for revision and refinement.

Special recognition for major individual roles in the direction, development, coordination of testing, revision, and refinement of these materials is extended to the following program staff: James B. Hamilton, Program Director; Robert E. Norton, Associate Program Director; Glen E. Fardig, Specialist; Lois Harrington, Program Assistant; and Karen Quinn, Program Assistant. Recognition is also extended to Kristy Ross, Technical Assistant; Joan Jones, Technical Assistant; and Jean Wisenbaugh, Artist for their contributions to the final refinement of the materials. Contributions made by former program staff toward developmental versions of these materials are also acknowledged. Calvin J. Cotrell directed the vocational teacher competency research studies upon which these modules are based and also directed the curriculum development effort from 1971–1972. Curtis R. Finch provided leadership for the program from 1972–1974.

Appreciation is also extended to all those outside The Center (consultants, field site coordinators, teacher educators, teachers, and others) who contributed so generously in various phases of the total effort. Early versions of the materials were developed by The Center in cooperation with the vocational teacher education faculties at Oregon State University and at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Preliminary testing of the materials was conducted at Oregon State University, Temple University, and University of Missouri-Columbia.

Following preliminary testing, major revision of all materials was performed by Center Staff with the assistance of numerous consultants and visiting scholars from throughout the country.

Advanced testing of the materials was carried out with assistance of the vocational teacher educators and students of Central Washington State College; Colorado State University; Ferris State College, Michigan; Florida State University; Holland College, P.E.I., Canada; Oklahoma State University; Rutgers University; State University College at Buffalo; Temple University; University of Arizona; University of Michigan-Flint; University of Minnesota-Twin Cities; University of Nebraska-Lincoln; University of Northern Colorado; University of Pittsburgh; University of Tennessee; University of Vermont; and Utah State University.

The Center is grateful to the National Institute of Education for sponsorship of this PBTE curriculum development effort from 1972 through its completion. Appreciation is extended to the Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education of the U.S. Office of Education for their sponsorship of training and advanced testing of the materials at 10 sites under provisions of EPDA Part F, Section 553. Recognition of funding support of the advanced testing effort is also extended to Ferris State College, Holland College, Temple University, and the University of Michigan-Flint.

Robert E. Taylor
Executive Director
The Center for Vocational Education

THE CENTER FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
The Ohio State University • 1960 Kenny Road • Columbus, Ohio 43210

The Center for Vocational Education's mission is to increase the ability of diverse agencies, institutions, and organizations to solve educational problems relating to individual career planning, preparation, and progression. The Center fulfills its mission by:

- Generating knowledge through research.
- Developing educational programs and products.
- Evaluating individual program needs and outcomes.
- Installing educational programs and products.
- Operating information systems and services.
- Conducting leadership development and training programs.

AAVIM

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR VOCATIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
Engineering Center
University of Georgia
Athens, Georgia 30602

The American Association for Vocational Instructional Materials (AAVIM) is an interstate organization of universities, colleges and divisions of vocational education devoted to the improvement of teaching through better information and teaching aids.

INTRODUCTION

Vocational education teachers can gain and maintain support for their programs by informing the public about them. The preparation of news releases and articles is one good means of informing the public.

In this module the term "news release" refers to a news story written in a prescribed style suitable for newspaper publication. The term "article" is used broadly, referring to a completed piece of writing as would be found in a newspaper feature story, a magazine, newsletter, or professional journal. News releases may be aimed at a broad population. Articles may be aimed at a broad population or at special interest groups served by a newsletter or magazine.

In preparing a news release or article, you will need to determine what is newsworthy, what audience is to be reached, and what approach is to be used to reach that audience. The news release or article can provide information for the readers and also give your students an excellent learning experience as they participate in its planning and/or writing. The focus of this module is on developing the skills you will need to prepare news releases and articles for publication.

4

ABOUT THIS MODULE

Objectives

Terminal Objective: While working in an actual school situation, prepare news releases and articles concerning your vocational program. Your performance will be assessed by your resource person, using the Teacher Performance Assessment Form, pp. 35–36 (*Learning Experience IV*).

Enabling Objectives:

1. After completing the required reading, demonstrate knowledge of the important considerations involved in writing news releases and articles (*Learning Experience I*).
2. After completing the required reading, write a news release concerning a vocational education program (*Learning Experience II*).
3. After completing the required reading, write an article concerning vocational education or a vocational program (*Learning Experience III*).

Resources

A list of the outside resources which supplement those contained within the module follows. Check with your resource person (1) to determine the availability and the location of these resources, (2) to locate additional references in your occupational specialty, and (3) to get assistance in setting up activities with peers or observations of skilled teachers, if necessary. Your resource person may also be contacted if you have any difficulty with directions, or in assessing your progress at any time.

Learning Experience I

Optional

Reference: American Association of Agricultural College Editors. *Communications Handbook*. Third Edition. Danville, IL: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1976.

Reference: *Public Relations Guide*. Cincinnati, OH: The Proctor & Gamble Company, Educational Services, 1975. (Revised 1977)

Reference: Strunk, William, Jr. and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. Second Edition. New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1972.

Local newspapers in which you can examine stories promoting vocational education.

Learning Experience II

Required

Reference: *Associated Press Stylebook*. New York, NY: Associated Press, 1977.

Learning Experience III

Optional

Reference: Outcalt, Richard M. "The Pros Versus the Rookies." *American Vocational Journal*. 49 (December 1974): 45–47; and/or another article of your choosing.

Learning Experience IV

Required

An actual school situation in which you can prepare news releases and articles concerning your vocational program.

A resource person to assess your competency in preparing news releases and articles concerning your vocational program.

This module covers performance element number 243 from Calvin J. Cotrell *et al.*, *Model Curricula for Vocational and Technical Teacher Education: Report No. V* (Columbus, OH: The Center for Vocational Education, The Ohio State University, 1972). The 384 elements in this document form the research base for all The Center's PBTE module development.

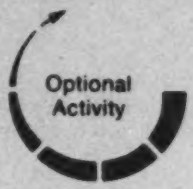
For information about the general organization of each module, general procedures for their use, and terminology which is common to all 100 modules, see About Using The Center's PBTE Modules on the inside back cover.

Learning Experience I

OVERVIEW

After completing the required reading, demonstrate knowledge of the important considerations involved in writing news releases and articles.

You will be reading the information sheet, Writing News Releases and Articles, pp. 6–15.



You may wish to read the supplementary references, AAACE, *Communications Handbook*, pp. 37–52; relevant sections of *Public Relations Guide*; and/or Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*.

You may wish to follow the local newspaper in your community for two or three weeks noting the stories which promote vocational education, and to critique their adequacy.

You will be demonstrating knowledge of the important considerations involved in writing news releases and articles by completing the Self-Check, pp. 16–18.

You will be evaluating your competency by comparing your completed Self-Check with the Model Answers, pp. 19–20.

Activity

For information on the use of news releases and articles as tools in promoting your vocational education program, and the prescribed form for writing and submitting them for publication, read the following information sheet:

WRITING NEWS RELEASES AND ARTICLES

As a vocational teacher, you sometimes may find yourself responsible for writing news releases or articles to inform the public of a new vocational program, to promote National Vocational Education Week, or to recognize a winner in a student vocational organization competition. As an advisor to a student vocational organization, you may need to give guidance to the organization's public relations program. Students will need assistance in preparing news releases and articles. You may also find yourself involved in public relations for a local district, or state vocational and/or other professional organizations.

You may want to prepare a news release or article for reasons such as the following:

- A news release or article is a flexible tool for reaching a specified audience. If a wide readership is what you want, a local newspaper may be the best news outlet; if a specific audience is sought, a special interest newsletter or magazine may be the best news outlet.
- News releases and articles can effectively handle complex topics, subtle concepts, and quantities of facts and figures.
- A well-written news release or article is an effective and inexpensive means of informing the public.
- The planning and writing of news and making contacts with news outlets provides a stimulating learning situation for students.
- The satisfaction students derive from seeing their articles or news releases in print is a great motivator.
- Well-written news releases and articles are effective in influencing public opinion.

There are limitations inherent in news releases and articles which you should keep in mind as you develop your plans. These include—

- Writing news releases and articles is time-consuming for the teacher.
- Getting news releases and articles accepted for publication can be a difficult and time-consuming job.
- News releases and articles will reach only the reading public which gets the newspaper, magazine, or newsletter that you have chosen as your news outlet.

Whenever the situation suggests the use of news releases and/or articles, you must consider the advantages and limitations of this medium. If what you want to say is newsworthy, if there is a good chance of reaching the audience you are trying to reach, and if you have the time or can enlist the cooperation of students in preparing a quality product, a news release or article may be the best means of achieving your objective.[1]

Making the Plan

Once the idea of a news release or article has been accepted, people have a natural inclination to pick up a pencil and to begin writing. However, it would be wise to resist this impulse and put aside the pencil and paper until some basic planning questions have been answered: Why? . . . Who? . . . What? . . . How? You will want to be sure you have carefully determined **why** you want to say it, **whom** you want to reach, **what** you want to say, and **how** you are going to reach the public.

1. To gain skill in developing a comprehensive school-community relations plan, of which news releases and articles may be a part, you may wish to refer to Module G–1, *Develop a School-Community Relations Plan for Your Vocational Program.*

Why?—Do you want to **inform** readers about a new vocational program, a state leadership or vocational youth conference, or a field trip that vocational students took to a local industry? Do you wish to **give recognition** to elected officers of a student vocational organization, to the winners of a student vocational organization competition, or to members of the vocational advisory committee?

Who?—Do you hope to reach a **broad cross section** of the public, or are you interested in reaching a **specific segment** of the public? Consider some of the characteristics of your proposed audience. What is their educational level? . . . their age? What interests do they have in common? How much do they already know about vocational education?

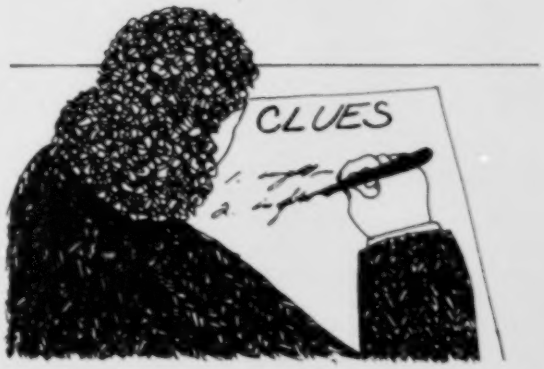
What?—Is the news you want to report **newsworthy?** By definition, news must be novel or different. Seek information which is newsworthy to persons outside your group. Some examples of newsworthy topics for news releases or articles are—

- advance information on prominent speakers
- organizational decisions at meetings
- pertinent anniversaries and milestones
- progress in community projects
- results of fund-raising drives
- election of officers
- announcement of awards or honors
- annual report details of general interest
- recognition programs
- new programs and/or courses authorized

How?—How will you get your message to the public? Will a **news release** or an **article** be most effective in reaching the public? What **news outlet** serves the segment of the public you hope to reach? Which news outlet will publish your article or news release?

You may be quite sure about the message you want to convey, but may be unsure about how to accomplish it most effectively. By analyzing the situation, you can develop an effective plan. Look for clues that will help you shape the article, and write them down. For example, if your purpose is to promote community support for a student vocational organization activity, you may analyze the situation as follows:

- You want to create enthusiasm within the organization for the project.
- You want to inform the general public in your community about the activity because it requires community support.
- Your prospective audience will not already be well informed about the vocational youth group.



- You want to convince the public that the proceeds from the club activity will benefit the community.

This type of analysis may lead to the conclusion that a well-written news release in the daily or weekly newspaper would be the most effective news outlet. In addition to the basic facts, your approach to the news release might be to include some background information on the student vocational organization and to inform the public about how the proceeds will be used. You may decide to involve members of the organization in planning and writing the news release.

In another situation, you may have been assigned to do a feature article promoting any phase of vocational education for National Vocational Education Week. You would first write down the clues which would help you form the article. For example, if you know this is to be published in a special section of the Sunday paper, you can assume that the following will be true.

- Your audience will have many varied interests.
- Many readers will be taxpayers. They will be interested in the benefits of education and the uses to which their tax dollars are being put.
- Competition for the readers' attention will be strong as Sunday papers are usually large, and you will be competing with professionals.

It is always advisable (and usually required) to obtain clearance from the school administration before developing a news release or article. Your school district may have established public relations policies. Some school districts have special people assigned to handle public relations functions for the district, and all news releases and articles must be prepared by, or channeled through them.

In other school districts, the policy may be to channel news releases and articles through a local

supervisor, a local director, or a principal. Or, school policy may be for you to deal directly with the media people in getting news releases and articles published. The latter is often true in smaller school districts. However, in the interests of good communications, always keep your supervisor, local director, or principal informed of your public relations activities.

News Release Outlets

If you will be dealing directly, or through your school administrative structure, with news media people, your next step will be to consider the news outlets in your community. Newspapers are the primary outlets for written news releases. There are currently more than 4,000 newspapers published in the United States.

Consider the metropolitan and suburban dailies which serve your community. You will have a better chance of getting your news release published if it is of widespread interest to their readers and if it is presented in the best possible form. Read these papers carefully to become familiar with the stories used in each department. Establish contact with the editor of the appropriate department.

For example, if your news release concerns an upcoming state vocational meeting, you may deal with the state editor. For a news release on a fashion show, you may need to contact the society editor. Send your news release to only one editor. If it should be handled by another department, the editor will send it to that department.

Many dailies publish special sections dealing with news from a specific neighborhood. Find out if there is a local correspondent and, if so, make contact with that person. This is usually your best contact for local school district or student vocational organization news.

One of your best chances of getting your news printed will probably be in a weekly newspaper. Usually about 75 percent of the news in a weekly newspaper is local. If a daily newspaper has already published your news release, try to get it in a weekly with a new angle. For example, if a daily prints an advance story on a meeting, a weekly might be furnished an in-depth analysis of the outcome of the meeting.

Another possible news outlet is the free shoppers' news or community newspapers which carry some news with a large section of advertising. These papers usually cater to neighborhood news of local interest. However, these are usually published less frequently than dailies, and may not be an appropriate outlet for your topic.

After you have determined your potential outlet, make plans to visit the editor. Newspaper people work under strict deadlines, so try to make an appointment when the editor does not have to meet a deadline. If a visit is not practical, you may write or telephone the editor.

When you make your contact, be prepared to do the following.

- Discuss what you have to offer the news outlet. An editor may be short of news and show a higher degree of interest than you might expect.
- Learn how you can best meet their needs.
- Find out when the material should be sent to meet their deadlines.
- Ask if a specific newspaper style handbook is used. If so, secure a copy.
- Learn how pictures should be supplied. You might be asked to provide negatives, arrange for prints, or work with an assigned photographer.
- Secure the full name of your outlet contact, title, telephone number, and mailing address.
- Give the contact your name, title, address, and telephone number.

When you have a clear idea of what it is you want to say, and have a specific outlet in mind, try to determine who your readers are. Always keep the image of the readers clearly in mind as you write. Consider their occupations, educational backgrounds, interests, prejudices, and level of understanding. The editor may be able to give you a description of the readers of the paper.

Writing the News Release

You must learn to report activities from an interesting angle to draw attention to your news release. A routine student vocational organization meeting is not interesting if it is written to resemble the minutes from a meeting as follows:

The chapter voted to sponsor a home safety campaign in the community. Members will call at home to distribute home safety checklists. They will leave pamphlets about eliminating home safety hazards. Members voted to visit homes during the hours of 7–9 p.m. on April 2–7.

This may be acceptable for the secretary's minutes, but for a newspaper it leaves much to be desired. Compare it with the following news release.

How Safe is Your Home

The local chapter of Future Homemakers of America plans to help you answer this question and find ways to eliminate any hazards you may have in your home.

Through a door-to-door canvass of the community from 7–9 p.m., April 2–7, the teenage members of the chapter will distribute home safety checklists which ask questions such as: Are stairways well lighted? Are appliance cords in good condition? Are poisonous items clearly marked and in locked storage?

At the same time, pamphlets about eliminating home hazards will be left at each dwelling.

This version contains the basic facts of the story in capsule form. It tells **who** (the local chapter of FHA), **what** (a canvass of the community), **when** (7 to 9 p.m., April 2–7), **where** (door-to-door), **why** (to help you find ways to eliminate home hazards), and **how** (by distributing home safety checklists and pamphlets).

Generally, these six basic questions—who? . . . what? . . . when? . . . where? . . . why? . . . how? —are answered in the first 50 words of a news release, even if the release is several hundred words long. This opening summary portion of a news release, which answers the basic questions, is called the **lead** because it guides or leads the reader through the balance of the story.

The **body** relates the details of the basic facts disclosed in the lead. These may be organized in order of descending importance or in a chronological order. The body of the story should answer all questions that your readers might be expected to ask after they have read the lead.

In writing a news release, it is essential that you be accurate in reporting information. Editors are under deadline pressures and don't always have the time to double-check information. Check and double-check names, addresses, and quotations before submitting them for publication. Don't rely on hearsay to obtain your story—find out the facts, and stick to them when you write the story. Don't exaggerate for the sake of being convincing.

If you are trying to get a point across, use evidence such as direct and indirect quotations and statistical figures to support your argument. Give complete information about the people you mention. For example, if your story is about a student who has done something interesting or received an award, report the student's age, year in school, and vocational training choice.

Remember, newspaper space is expensive, so get the story across in as few words as possible. You may have supplementary details which would make good reading material in a magazine article or feature story, but in a news release it is important to be brief. Use short, easy-to-read sentences, and short paragraphs. Concentrate on using familiar language which will be understood by the general reader. For instance, don't use "credible" when "believable" will do, or "per capita" instead of "each." Here are some tips to follow in choosing the correct word to use in a news release.[2]

- Use a short word instead of a long one (e.g., "soon," not "imminent").
- Use a simple word instead of a complex one (e.g., "give," not "contribute").
- Use an active word instead of a passive one (e.g., "**Fertilize** apple trees to increase their yield," not "**Apple trees need to be fertilized** in order to obtain high yields of fruit").

2. Adapted from AAACE, *Communications Handbook*, pp. 38–40.

- Use a specific word instead of a general one (e.g., "12 feet long," not "rather long").
- Be positive instead of negative (e.g., "Water your lawn regularly," not "It is not recommended that lawns be watered irregularly").
- Omit unnecessary and redundant words (e.g., "public," not "general public").
- Omit unnecessary prepositions (e.g., "The annual Green County 4-H Harvest Show features choice corn and quality grain samples," not "Choice ears of corn and quality samples of grain will be the feature attraction at the annual Green County 4-H Harvest Show").

Sample 1 illustrates the form commonly used for news releases. The numbers on the sample news release correspond to the numbered items in the explanatory material which follows.

1. Your news release should always carry the name, title, address, and telephone number of the person who has the responsibility for it.
2. The date on which you sent the release should appear at the top of the copy. It may help to eliminate any confusion regarding when you wish to have the release printed.
3. The term "SPECIAL" tells the editor a special version of the story was written for the paper. If the term "EXCLUSIVE" is used it means that only this paper is receiving the story in any form.
4. If your release is eligible for publication upon its receipt by the editor, use "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE." If you wish to send a story in advance but desire its publication withheld until a later date, instruct the editor accordingly.
5. On the first page, you should leave about one-fourth or one-fifth of the page blank for the editor's instructions to the printers. Succeeding pages may be started considerably closer to the top.
6. Most editors prefer double-spaced typewritten releases.*
7. All paragraphs should be indented by at least five spaces and preferably an inch.*
8. Most editors ask you to leave a margin of at least one inch and preferably an inch and one-half at each side of your copy.*
9. When a story is continuing to another page, you should use the identifying term "MORE."
10. At the top left corner of your story's second page and each succeeding page, you should place a few words identifying it with your story; then add the proper page number.
11. Use the symbol "-30-" or "# # #" to indicate the end of your story.

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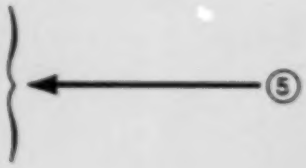
*Not reflected in printed sample shown on p. 11.

SAMPLE 1

NEWS RELEASE



(1) From: Harold Miller
District Vocational Supervisor
1230 Fairview
Phone: 789–4218

(2) Date: October 23, 1977

(3) SPECIAL TO THE VALLEY JOURNAL

(4) FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(6) Green Valley vocational students and educators are hoping that the state's residents will get better acquainted with vocational education and its performance in recent years during Vocational Education Week, February 9th through 15th.

(7) Throughout the county many events have been planned in observance of Vocational Education Week. These include open house programs at schools and colleges, appreciation banquets for employers and advisory committee members, a special edition of the newspaper, presentations to service clubs and other civic groups, exhibits and displays in downtown stores and shopping center malls, and radio and television programs.

Governor Richard D. Brown has issued a proclamation setting aside February 9th through 15th as Vocational Education Week in the state. Mayor Ann C. Page has issued a similar local proclamation.

(8)

(9) -MORE-

(10) Voc. Ed. Week
Page 2

Approximately 75 members of the Green Valley school district chapter of the Vocational Industrial Clubs of America will visit the capitol February 11th to see the legislature in session, and talk with legislative leaders and their own representatives and senators. Mr. Duane Schultz, carpentry teacher, and Ms. Delia Ryan, drafting teacher, will supervise the club activity.

-30- (11)

Outlets for Articles

Articles differ from news releases in a number of characteristics. News releases nave a greater sense of timeliness. A news release often becomes worthless if it is not printed by a given date. For example, an advance story on an event is no longer news in the same sense after the event has occurred. Articles tend to cover broad topics in greater depth, while news releases tend to report facts and events.

Feature stories are a type of article used by newspapers. These stories are not generally news, but they are of interest to the public. Many feature stories can be printed at any time, and newspapers tend to accumulate a supply of this type of material to fill space when news, advertising, or botn are short.

In planning for your article, it is essential that you have a specified news outlet in mind, as this will affect your approach to the article. It will also greatly increase your chances for publication.

News outlets for articles are many and varied. The daily, semi-weekly, and weekly newspapers which serve your community are good outlets for feature stories. In addition to the newspapers that readers purchase, many communities are served by weekly newspapers which are supported entirely by advertising. Since many of these papers are published once or twice a week, they do not compete with the dailies for regular news, but tend to publish more feature stories.

Many state vocational associations, service area associations, and trade organizations publish newsletters which are readily available news outlets serving a specified readership. School districts and teacher organizations sometimes publish newsletters or bulletins providing another news outlet aimed at a slightly different audience. Some newsletters or bulletins are published on a weekly basis, but many are published only monthly or quarterly.

Magazines and professional journals provide another outlet for articles. The *American Vocational Journal*, vocational service area journals, professional association journals, and student vocational organization magazines all accept articles for publication. If you are unfamiliar with these publications, you should visit a library and become familiar with them. Specifically, note the following about the articles which were published.

- their length
- the type of information they contain
- the educational level they are written for
- writing style
- pictorial or graphic support

As you are choosing your news outlet, consider the frequency of publication. The lag time between the receipt of an article and its publication in a newsletter, magazine, or journal is often several months or more. This is much greater than that between receipt and publication for a newspaper. This time factor may influence your choice of news outlet and the tone of your article.

Establishing contact with the editor can save you much time and effort. For example, you might consider developing an article on support of vocational education for the *American Vocational Journal*. However, the editors may not accept articles on this topic if it does not fit into the themes of the next several issues. Thus, it would be a waste of your time to develop such an article for this outlet. You may wish to contact another journal or to change your topic.

If possible, see the editor in person. If not, a letter or telephone call may suffice. Be prepared to—

- clearly explain the idea for your article
- ask if the publication has developed guidelines for authors; if so, secure a copy
- learn if pictures or graphics should be supplied
- secure the full name of your contact, his/her title, telephone number, and address
- find out when materials should be sent to meet deadlines

Writing the Article

An article requires more careful organization of your material than a news release since an article covers a topic in greater depth. An article often involves more interpretation of facts, while a news release tends just to report the facts or an event.

You may wish to involve students in some or all of the steps involved in planning and/or writing an article. For example, students often have good ideas for topics, and they may be familiar with the printed media commonly read in the community. Gathering information through interviews, surveys, or the background research for the article can sometimes be made an effective part of the student's learning experiences. The actual writing of the article may be part of a student vocational organization activity, or it might be a cooperative effort with a journalism or English class.

Before you begin writing, plan carefully what you want to say. You might imagine you are explaining what you want to share with an imaginary reader. Second, outline your article using major points with supporting information under each major point. Combine and rearrange these points as necessary. Present your material in a logical manner. Consider using chronological order or order of importance, or simply substantiating your main points.

Although the introduction to your article does not need to contain the whole story like the lead of a news release, it should contain enough of your major points to arouse your reader's curiosity and to preview what follows. Note how the following two introductions accomplish this.

Student teachers are such nice people—and therein lies a problem! They are simply not ready to face the real pros—the senior high school students who have had nine or more years of experience in maneuvering teachers. Fortunately, student or new teachers can learn to cope successfully with the tactics of the pros by applying some basic concepts.

Shrimp Newburg on toast points served bubbly hot with asparagus spears: you can't get a meal like that for $1.25 in many restaurants. However, it is available regularly at the Ortonville Valley Vocational School. Students in the food service program prepare this and many other gourmet dishes regularly.

The body of the article should develop your main points with clear supporting evidence. Use facts, statistics, or quotations to support the main points of your article. Include only information relevant to your topic even though extra information may seem interesting to you. Articles of appropriate length are published more readily. The conclusion should forcefully summarize your main points.

Consider these four general rules when writing an article.

- **Be conversational.**—Remember that you are writing to express an idea, not to impress someone. Try to write as you would talk, and read your writing aloud to make sure it sounds natural. Common words are usually better than complicated technical terms, unless technical terms are essential to your meaning.
- **Be varied.**—Critically look over what you have written to see whether you have used the same word or phrase over and over. Check the length of each sentence. Usually, it is a good idea to keep your sentences short for clarity, but try to vary the length of sentences so your reader doesn't get bored.
- **Be logical.**—If you have trouble expressing what you think, it's probably because you haven't thought through your idea completely. Your reader will not take the time to unscramble your thoughts. Eliminate flowery phrases or sentences that sound good but don't mean anything.
- **Be accurate.**—This means accuracy in content, as well as checking your final manuscript for errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

When you have finished the rough draft of the article, show it to someone else and get some feedback. Then revise the article as necessary before you submit the final copy. Send an original, typewritten, double-spaced copy of your manuscript to the editor of the periodical. If you want it returned, include a self-addressed, stamped return envelope.

After you submit the article to a publisher, wait for a response before submitting it to another publisher. If you do not receive an acknowledgement of the receipt of your article and the action taken on it, follow up by letter to make sure it was received. If it was not accepted for publication, the editor may be willing to tell you why and to give you helpful suggestions.

Sample 2 shows a well-written article about a student vocational organization.

For further information on working with the news media, and planning and writing news releases and articles, you may wish to read one or more of the supplementary references, AAACE, *Communications Handbook*, pp. 37–52; and/or relevant sections of *Public Relations Guide*. For information on good, clear writing style, you may read Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*.

You may wish to follow the local newspaper(s) in your community for several weeks, noting stories that promote vocational education. Note general references, legislation, bond issues, etc., regarding vocational education to give you an idea of the general attitudes toward, and level of understanding of, vocational education in your community. You might also choose to critique the effectiveness of each story, using the criteria provided in this module, or critique forms or checklists provided by your resource person.

SAMPLE 2

FEATURE ARTICLE

National Student Organization

Proud Past—Bright Future

One of the best examples of youth in action on the American scene today is the FFA, the national organization for students studying vocational agriculture in the public high schools. It is an organization run by student-members under adult guidance.

Soon after vocational agriculture became a subject in many of the nation's high schools in 1917, instructors became aware of the need to provide practical training beyond the traditional classroom approach. Their idea was to make the instruction more interesting by making practical work experience, competitive livestock judging, and agricultural leadership development activities part of the instruction. Vocational agriculture instructors and students eagerly accepted the learn-by-doing principle.

The FFA was founded nationally in 1928 after similar organizations had started in several states. Right from the beginning, the FFA had stressed leadership, cooperation and citizenship—all vital to success in modern agriculture.

Today the FFA has a membership of nearly 450,000 with chapters in approximately 8,500 high schools throughout the nation. The organization has state associations in all states, except Alaska, and in Puerto Rico.

Vocational agriculture or agribusiness programs are funded in part by the National Vocational Education Acts through the U.S. Office of Education, state departments of education and the local school systems. The FFA operates under a federal charter granted by an Act of Congress in 1950 (Public Law 740, 81st Congress). The charter provides for a national board of directors and a board of student officers elected from the membership.

FFA activities are specifically designed to be a part of the instructional program in vocational agriculture. Members learn through active participation how to conduct and take part in public meetings, how to speak in public, and how to take a leadership role in their school and community.

Each local chapter and each state association elects its own officers each year. In all cases the teacher of vocational agriculture is the advisor of the local FFA chapter and the state supervisor of agricultural education is the advisor of the state association.

FFA members have full opportunity to practice the principles of democracy in conducting the affairs of their organization by exercising their privilege to vote at chapter meetings, serve on committees, and otherwise assist in carrying on the work of their organization. Elected delegates to the state and national conventions, held each year, are asked to decide on major issues facing the organization.

Advancement through the degrees in the organization from the Green Hand through the Chapter Farmer, State Farmer, and American Farmer or Agribusinessman is based on achievement in farming, ranching, or agribusiness careers.

Nearly 8,000 public high schools have FFA chapters. One of the requirements for membership in FFA is that a student be enrolled in vocational agriculture. Students may retain their membership until they are 21.

Competition is a key element of the FFA from the chapter to the national level. Each year the FFA recognizes more than 78,000 members at local, state and national levels for outstanding achievement in activities related to agriculture career and leadership development.

Funds for awards are provided by more than 700 businesses, organizations, and individuals that sponsor FFA programs through the National FFA Foundation, Inc. The Foundation provides nearly half a million dollars to make the incentive awards available to deserving FFA members.

The following items check your comprehension of the material in the information sheet, Writing News Releases and Articles, pp. 6–15. Each of the six items requires a short essay-type response. Please explain fully, but briefly, and make sure you respond to all parts of each item.

SELF-CHECK

1. What are some of the most important factors to consider when deciding whether to write an article or news release? Explain.

2. Assume you want to release a story to the public on the local winners in a student vocational organization competition. Outline your procedure.

3. Assume you decide a feature article is the most effective medium for informing the public, and that school district policy is for the teacher to deal directly with the news outlet. How might you involve students so they could benefit from the experience?

4. Describe the characteristics of a well-written news release.

5. Describe the characteristics of a well-written article.

6. Outline the procedures in getting a feature or journal article published.

Compare your written responses on the Self-Check with the Model Answers given below. Your responses need not exactly duplicate the model responses; however, you should have covered the same **major** points.

MODEL ANSWERS

1. Before one decides to write an article or a news release to inform the public, one should consider the advantages and limitations of these methods. The advantages include the fact that these are flexible tools. They can be directed at the general public or at a specified audience. They are an effective means of influencing public opinion. They also provide an inexpensive means of informing the public. The preparation and distribution of news releases and articles can provide a stimulating learning experience for students, and seeing their stories in print is motivating.

   The limitations which one must consider include the fact that writing news releases and articles, as well as getting them published, is a time-consuming task. Also, news releases and articles will only reach the people who get the news outlet you have chosen. Thus, if what you wish to inform the public about is newsworthy, if there is a good chance of reaching the desired public, and if enough time is available for you and/or students to produce and seek news outlets, a news release or article may be the answer to your promotional problem.

2. First, consider the school policies on news releases in your school district. Will you be dealing directly with the news outlets, or will the release be channeled through school administrative offices? Second, consider if student involvement would be a worthwhile learning experience. It seems likely that the publicity chairman for the student vocational organization might be involved in preparing the news release.

   Third, consider why you want to prepare a news release, who you want to reach, what you want to say, and how you are going to reach the public. You probably want the story released to give recognition to the winning students. The story will be newsworthy if released immediately, before people hear about it through other channels. The best means of reaching the general public in your community will probably be local newspaper coverage. Your procedure will probably involve sending the news release to the appropriate editor of the daily or weekly newspaper.

3. Students could be involved in any or all of the following procedures. First, they might aid in selecting a topic which would interest the audience. Second, they could help in identifying appropriate audiences and the characteristics of these audiences. Third, they could aid in gathering the information for the article. For example, they might interview an authority on the selected topic, or they might conduct an opinion survey to discover people's current feeling on the selected topic. Fourth, interested students could write the feature article. For example, this activity might be coordinated with an English or journalism teacher. It might be handled with the assistance of the student vocational organization publicity committee.

   Finally, students could aid in identifying the appropriate news outlets in the community. Be careful not to have different people acting as contacts to the same news outlets. You may deal with the news outlets directly, through the public relations chairperson of the student vocational organization, or through another student.

4. The lead, or the first fifty words in a news release, should give the basic information of who, what, when, where, why, and how. The body of the story should contain the details of the story which support the basic information given in the lead. All the information contained in the story should be accurate, especially names, addresses, and quotations. It should contain no extra details and be written in short, easy-to-read sentences. It should be free from spelling errors. The news release should be written in prescribed news release form including the author's name, title, address, and telephone number. Specified release instructions should be included. It should be typewritten, double-spaced, with page numbers and the end of the story clearly designated.

5. The material should be organized in a logical manner and aimed at a specific readership that would find it interesting. The introduction should preview the article and make the reader want to read the article. The body should clearly develop the main points. The length should be appropriate to the topic and for the publication for which it was developed. The content should be accurate and it should be free of spelling and grammatical errors. It should be easy for the reader to understand and include only information relevant to the topic. It should be written in prescribed article form—double-spaced, typewritten copy, page numbers—and contain the author's name, title, address, and telephone number.

6. After you have decided upon a topic for your article, consider the audience you wish to reach. Do you wish to reach the general public, youth, or people in a specific vocational service area? Second, consider the outlets for the feature or journal article which serve the public you hope to reach. Third, establish contact in person, by telephone, or in writing with the most appropriate outlet. Explain to the appropriate editor the idea for your article; secure guidelines for authors. Fourth, write your article following the established article criteria, and send it to the appropriate editor. Finally, watch for its publication. If it is not published, you may wish to contact the editor to make sure it was received and ask why it was not published.

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE: Your completed Self-Check should have covered the same **major** points as the model responses. If you missed some points or have questions about any additional points you made, review the material in the information sheet, Writing News Releases and Articles, pp. 6–15, or check with your resource person if necessary.

Learning Experience II

OVERVIEW

After completing the required reading, write a news release concerning a vocational education program.

You will be reading relevant sections of *The Associated Press Stylebook*.

You will be writing a news release on a topic concerning a vocational education program.

You will be evaluating your competency in writing a news release, using the News Release Checklist, p. 23.

Most newspapers have their own style books or follow standards outlined in a style book such as the *Associated Press Stylebook*. A style book contains specific information regarding rules on capitalization, punctuation, abbreviations, numerals, and the hyphen, which promote consistency in the mechanics of writing. For information on standards of newspaper style, read sections in the *Associated Press Stylebook* covering these rules.

Write a news release on a topic of your choosing concerning a vocational program. The topic you select may concern a vocational program for which you are responsible, a college vocational program, an industrial training program, another teacher's program, or another vocational program with which you are familiar.

Before drafting your news release, consider the prospective audience you wish to reach, the prospective news outlets you could use to reach this audience, and the aspects of the vocational program which you wish to promote or explain to this audience. In writing your news release, follow the guidelines provided in the *Associated Press Stylebook*.

If you find content difficult to obtain, you may write your news release using the Sample Information provided below.

SAMPLE INFORMATION

WHAT	The local chapter of the Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA) invited a speaker for a special program on apprenticeship programs for students of Langley Technical Institute.
WHO	Skyler King, President of the Davis Aeronautics Company.
WHEN	3:00, Wednesday afternoon, September 21, 1977.
WHERE	Langley Technical Institute lecture hall.
WHY	To inform students, other employers, and interested members of the community of a new apprenticeship program for disadvantaged young people at Davis Aeronautics.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	The Springfield Chamber of Commerce selected King as Businessman of the Year because of his outstanding apprenticeship program.
QUOTES	"I would like to see other businesspersons adopt the program we used so successfully last year," said Mr. King in a telephone interview.

After you have written your news release, use the News Release Checklist, p. 23, to evaluate your work.

NEWS RELEASE CHECKLIST

Directions: Place an X in the NO, PARTIAL, or FULL box to indicate that each of the following performance components was not accomplished, partially accomplished, or fully accomplished. If, because of special circumstances, a performance component was not applicable, or impossible to execute, place an X in the N/A box.

Name _____

Date _____

Resource Person _____

	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE			
	N/A	No	Partial	Full
The news release:				
1. contained the basic facts of the story in the lead paragraph	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. was accurate concerning facts	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. was brief and contained no extra material	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. was free from spelling and grammatical errors	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. was written in prescribed news release form, including:				
a. author's name, address, and telephone number	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. release instructions specified	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. typewritten, double-spaced	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. page numbers and end of story designated	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. communicated a message clearly to the reader	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. was written at a level appropriate for the intended audience	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. followed newspaper style rules regarding:				
a. capitalization	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. abbreviations	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. numerals	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. hyphens	☐	☐	☐	☐

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE: All items must receive FULL, or N/A, responses. If any item receives a NO, or PARTIAL response, review the material in the information sheet, Writing News Releases and Articles, pp. 6–15, and the guidelines in the *Associated Press Stylebook*, revise your news release accordingly, or check with your resource person if necessary.

NOTES

Learning Experience III

OVERVIEW

After completing the required reading, write an article concerning vocational education or a vocational program.

You will be reading the information sheet, Article Guidelines, pp. 26–28.

You may wish to read Outcalt, "The Pros Versus the Rookies," *American Vocational Journal*, and/or another article of your choosing, and to critique the adequacy of each.

You will be writing an article on a topic of your choosing concerning vocational education or a specific vocational program.

You will be evaluating your competency in writing an article, using the Article Checklist, p. 31.

For information on publishers' requirements and recommendations for acceptable articles for magazines and journals, read the following information sheet:

ARTICLE GUIDELINES

Many magazines and journals publish guidelines for prospective authors. These guidelines are sometimes published in the magazine or journal itself; if not, you may request a copy from the editor (see Sample 3). Enclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope helps to ensure a prompt reply.

These guidelines often include information as to the type of articles which are selected for publication. Also included may be information regarding the—

- number of copies to submit, and whether one copy must be an original
- format of articles (Manuscript format of double-spaced, typewritten copy is usually required. Pages are numbered. The author's name, title, address, and telephone number are included.)
- length of acceptable articles
- information on footnotes and bibliography, if these are used in the publication
- procedures in submitting photographs and artwork (Many publications develop their own artwork in their graphics departments.)
- procedures for notifying authors of receipt of copy and for returning manuscripts which are not used (A self-addressed, stamped envelope must generally be enclosed if you want a manuscript returned.)
- deadlines for each issue
- exclusive rights to publications (Many publications will not accept materials which have been previously published.)

SAMPLE 3

GUIDELINES FOR MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION[3]

The following guidelines on manuscript preparation are intended to aid those who wish to submit feature-length articles for possible publication in the Journal.

1. **Have something original to say.**—AVJ is interested in your thinking, not a review of the literature. Nothing can stop a reader more quickly or destroy the credibility of an author more completely than a series of long quotations from other writers. If you don't have any ideas of your own, you probably shouldn't be attempting to write an article.

In addition to insisting on your own thinking, make sure that your topic is fresh. Trends, concepts, and movements such as performance-based instruction, education-industry cooperation, and career education can stand only so much mileage. If you do have a fresh angle or commentary on a much discussed topic, start your article there. Don't think you have to review everything that has been said on the subject since Year One. If you're in doubt about your topic, you can save time and energy by sending the editors an outline before you write your article.

2. **Say it to the right audience.**—Articles aimed at persuading school board members to allot more money to vocational programs belong in a magazine school board members read. If you want to offer first grade teachers suggestions for career development activities, send that article to a magazine first grade teachers read. Most AV Journal readers are vocational educators involved at the secondary and post-secondary levels; 70 percent of them are shop and classroom teachers. Is this the audience you want to reach with your ideas?

3. **Look at recent issues.**—A review of the magazine's last three or four issues will offer clues on who reads it, what the audience is interested in, article length and style, graphics, etc. That information on the Journal's personality, combined with these guidelines, should help you write an article that's right for the AV Journal.

4. **Do your legwork.**—Legwork means gathering the necessary facts to back up your argument and making sure that every fact is accurate—down to the last statistic in your article. If you include bibliographical references, make sure they are accurate, too. Check the library to make sure you've attributed quotations from Robert Worthington to Robert Worthington and not to Sidney Marland. Call the information office of your state or local education department to get the correct figures on vocational enrollment trends. Don't guess at facts or gloss over them with vague statements.

5. **Be brief, but not too brief.**—Articles in the 1500–1800 word range (six to eight pages of manuscript, typed double-spaced) have the best chance of getting published. But don't strangle the life out of your article to bring it under 1800 words. Certainly it is briefer to say "students find the program valuable," than to quote what two or three students actually say about the program, but what they say may offer more conclusive evidence that they do find it valuable, and what they say will probably make more interesting reading.

6. **Make it readable.**—Is your article developed logically? Are the sentences clear? Have you littered your manuscript with cliches? Have you bogged the reader down with endless lists of people who served on advisory committees? Have you blunted your argument with excessive detail? Have you put too much burden on your reader by asking him/her to refer to figures, charts, models, etc.? Have you weeded out all repetition? (Repetition may be effective in the classroom; in a magazine article, it's poison.)

Does your article look like an outline with long lists, numbered indentations, and lettered subindentations? If so, rewrite it. Put it in narrative form. And don't depend on headings to make transitions in thought. If each paragraph does not build on the preceding one, there's something wrong with the way you've organized your material.

Avoid the overuse of such vague statements as "it was decided," or "a plan was developed." If you want to emphasize a point, do it with a short emphatic statement. Don't depend on underscoring or capital letters to do the job for you.

(One way to test readability is to have someone who has not seen your article read it aloud to you.)

7. **Summarize lengthy quotations.**—Block style indentation may be appropriate for lengthy

3. Adapted from the 1973 guidelines published by the *American Vocational Journal*, Harry H. Cutler (Ed.). (Washington, DC: American Vocational Association, 1973).

quotations in term papers and dissertations, but your manuscript won't look like a term paper when it's set in type for the Journal. If possible, summarize the point made by another author and avoid using lengthy direct quotations in your article. If the exact words of the cited author are germane to what your article says, treat them as part of your narrative and put quotation marks around them. . . .

8. **Spare the footnotes.**—Footnotes are as essential to term papers as block style indentation, but they serve only to interrupt magazine readers. That does not mean you can't or shouldn't document what you write for the Journal, but don't push your reader to the bottom of the page every time you mention someone else's published work.

The best way to handle such a reference is to include the appropriate title and author in your narrative. For example: "Lowell Burkett urged readers of his September 1973 AV Journal column to communicate with members of Congress, to let them know that vocational education is for people of all ages and that it takes place in many types of institutions and at many levels."

Avoid research style documentation in which a statement is interrupted by material in parentheses. Example: "In a study of counselor concerns (Jones, 1975), it was found that vocational image ranked highest."

Don't document the obvious—for example, Sidney Marland on career education or quotations from Shakespeare or the Holy Bible. Keep in mind that familiar quotations and sayings can be referred to without citing chapter and verse.

9. **Expect to be edited.**—AVJ reserves the right to edit for style, make cuts when space requires, and change titles to conform to Journal format. Content is not intentionally altered, and the staff makes every effort to let you see a galley proof before your article appears in print.

10. **Illustrations should illustrate.**—The Journal does use photographs, drawings, graphs and charts to illustrate articles. Most of these are supplied by article contributors. They are used as space permits, at the discretion of the editors. The best photographs have a message of their own. Usually they show people doing something. . . .

Black and white, 8" × 10" photographs are preferred, but other sizes are acceptable. Polaroid photographs do not usually reproduce well. Color prints do not often make an easy transition to black and white magazine reproduction. Full color is only rarely used in the Journal, but if good color prints or transparencies are available to illustrate your article, it's worth mentioning in a note sent with your manuscript. Submit black and white photographs with your manuscript, and include information for picture captions. Be sure to tell who is in the picture, what they are doing, where, and when. Make sure names are written legibly and spelled correctly.

Reader-submitted drawings are rarely used. Designs and motifs used with articles are prepared by a commercial art firm retained by the Journal. However, drawings that show something the reader needs to know—how a piece of machinery works, for example, or a floor plan used in an innovative facility—may be used.

Graphs and charts should add to what is said in your article and should convey an idea more quickly than the same idea could be explained in the text. If your narrative tells the reader the same thing the chart does, the chart is unnecessary. If your chart could be replaced by one or two narrative paragraphs, it probably should be. When used, graphs and charts should be able to speak for themselves; if they require lengthy explanation in text or footnotes, they obviously are not serving their purpose.

11. **Submit two legible copies of your article.**—Manuscripts should be typed, double-spaced. Put your name, address, and phone number on each copy of the article, and mail to Managing Editor, AV Journal, 1510 H St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

12. **Be patient.**—Journal editors make every effort to keep authors advised of the status of manuscripts they have submitted, but the number of manuscripts received and the day-to-day business of publishing a magazine nine months a year sometimes make manuscript review a slow process.

You may wish to read Outcalt, "The Pros Versus the Rookies," *American Vocational Journal*, and/or another article of your choosing. Examining a variety of recent articles from journals such as AVJ is highly recommended. You might also choose to critique the effectiveness of each article, using the criteria provided in this module, or critique forms or checklists provided by your resource person.

Write an article on a topic concerning vocational education or a vocational program. The topic you select may concern vocational education in general, a vocational program for which you are responsible, a college vocational program, an industrial training program, another teacher's program, or another vocational program with which you are familiar.

Before drafting your article, consider the prospective audience you wish to reach, the prospective news outlets you could use to reach this audience, and the aspects of vocational education or the vocational program which you wish to promote or explain to this audience. In writing your article, follow the guidelines in Sample 3, pp. 27–28, or guidelines from another magazine or journal of your choice.

After you have written your article, use the Article Checklist, p. 31, to evaluate your work.

NOTES

ARTICLE CHECKLIST

Directions: Place an X in the NO, PARTIAL, or FULL box to indicate that each of the following performance components was not accomplished, partially accomplished, or fully accomplished. If, because of special circumstances, a performance component was not applicable, or impossible to execute, place an X in the N/A box.

Name _____

Date _____

Resource Person _____

	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE			
	N/A	No	Partial	Full
In planning the article:				
1. a topic of interest to the intended audience was selected	☐	☐	☐	☐
When completed, the article:				
2. was directed at the specific readership of a publication	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. was organized in a logical way	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. was written in prescribed article form, including:				
a. typewritten, double-spaced	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. author's name, title, address, and telephone number	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. page numbers and end of story designated	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. contained an introduction which would arouse the reader's curiosity	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. presented facts, statistics, and/or quotations to support the main points	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. was a length appropriate to the topic and the publication for which it was written	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. was free from spelling and grammatical errors	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. was accurate in terms of content	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. included only information relevant to the topic	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. was conversational in tone and easy to understand	☐	☐	☐	☐

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE: All items must receive FULL, or N/A responses. If any item receives a NO, or PARTIAL response, review the material in the information sheets, Writing News Releases and Articles, pp. 6–15, and Article Guidelines, pp. 26–28, revise your article accordingly, or check with your resource person if necessary.

NOTES

Learning Experience IV

FINAL EXPERIENCE

While working in an **actual school situation,*** prepare news releases and articles concerning your vocational program.

As you fulfill your teaching duties, determine when news releases and articles could effectively inform others concerning your vocational program. Based on those decisions, prepare news releases and articles. This will include—

- selecting a topic for at least one news release and one article
- selecting an appropriate news outlet for each
- planning and writing each
- submitting each for publication

Arrange to have your resource person review your news release, article, and other documentation.

Your total competency will be assessed by your resource person, using the Teacher Performance Assessment Form, pp. 35–36.

Based upon the criteria specified in this assessment instrument, your resource person will determine whether you are competent in preparing news releases and articles concerning your vocational program.

*For a definition of "actual school situation," see the inside back cover.

NOTES

TEACHER PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FORM

Prepare News Releases and Articles Concerning Your Vocational Program (G–5)

Directions: Indicate the level of the teacher's accomplishment by placing an X in the appropriate box under the LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE heading. If, because of special circumstances, a performance component was not applicable, or impossible to execute, place an X in the N/A box.

Name _____

Date _____

Resource Person _____

	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE					
	N/A	None	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
News Release						
In planning the news release, the teacher:						
1. selected a newsworthy topic which appealed to a specific readership	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. established contact with a news outlet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. followed school district policies on news releases	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When completed, the news release:						
4. contained the basic facts of the story in the lead paragraph	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. was accurate concerning facts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. was brief and contained no extra material	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. was free from spelling and grammatical errors	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. was written in prescribed news release form	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. communicated a message clearly to the reader	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. was written at a level appropriate for the intended audience	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. followed newspaper style rules	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. was published by the intended news outlet, or follow-up action was taken to determine what the editor decided in regard to the news release	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Article						
In planning the article, the teacher:						
13. selected a topic of interest to the publication's readership	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. followed district policies on publishing school information	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	N/A	None	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
15. established contact with an appropriate news outlet ..	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. obtained guidelines from the editor of the publication .	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When completed, the article:						
17. contained an introduction which would arouse the reader's curiosity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. presented facts, statistics, and quotations to support the main points	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. was a length appropriate to the topic and the publication for which it was written	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. was written in prescribed article form	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. was organized in a logical way	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. was free from spelling and grammatical errors	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
23. was accurate in terms of content	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. was conversational in tone and easy to understand ...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. included only information relevant to the topic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. was directed at the specific readership of the publication	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
27. was published by the intended news outlet, or follow-up action was taken to determine what the editor decided in regard to the article	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE: All items must receive N/A, GOOD, or EXCELLENT responses. If any item receives a NONE, POOR, or FAIR response, the teacher and resource person should meet to determine what additional activities the teacher needs to complete in order to reach competency in the weak area(s).

ABOUT USING THE CENTER'S PBTE MODULES

Organization

Each module is designed to help you gain competency in a particular skill area considered important to teaching success. A module is made up of a series of learning experiences, some providing background information, some providing practice experiences, and others combining these two functions. Completing these experiences should **enable** you to achieve the **terminal** objective in the final learning experience. The final experience in each module always requires you to demonstrate the skill in an actual school situation when you are an intern, a student teacher, or an inservice teacher.

Procedures

Modules are designed to allow you to individualize your teacher education program. You need to take only those modules covering skills which you do not already possess. Similarly, you need not complete any learning experience within a module if you already have the skill needed to complete it. Therefore, before taking any module, you should carefully review (1) the Introduction, (2) the Objectives listed on p. 4, (3) the Overviews preceding each learning experience, and (4) the Final Experience. After comparing your present needs and competencies with the information you have read in these sections, you should be ready to make one of the following decisions:

- that you do not have the competencies indicated, and should complete the entire module
- that you are competent in one or more of the enabling objectives leading to the final learning experience, and thus can omit that (those) learning experience(s)
- that you are already competent in this area, and ready to complete the final learning experience in order to "test out"
- that the module is inappropriate to your needs at this time

When you are ready to take the final learning experience **and** have access to an actual school situation, make the necessary arrangements with your resource person. If you do not complete the final experience successfully, meet with your resource person and arrange (1) to repeat the experience, or (2) complete (or review) previous sections of the module or other related activities suggested by your resource person before attempting to repeat the final experience.

Options for recycling are also available in each of the learning experiences preceding the final experience. Any time you do not meet the minimum level of performance required to meet an objective, you and your resource person may meet to select activities to help you reach competency. This could involve (1) completing parts of the module previously skipped; (2) repeating activities; (3) reading supplementary resources or completing additional activities suggested by the resource person; (4) designing your own learning experience; or (5) completing some other activity suggested by you or your resource person.

Terminology

Actual School Situation . . . refers to a situation in which you are actually working with, and responsible for, secondary or post-secondary vocational students in a real school. An intern, a student teacher, or an inservice teacher would be functioning in an actual school situation. If you do **not** have access to an actual school situation when you are taking the module, you can complete the module **up to** the final learning experience. You would then do the final learning experience later; i.e., when you have access to an actual school situation.

Alternate Activity or Feedback . . . refers to an item or feedback device which may **substitute** for required items which, due to special circumstances, you are unable to complete.

Occupational Specialty . . . refers to a specific area of preparation within a vocational service area (e.g., the service area Trade and Industrial Education includes occupational specialties such as automobile mechanics, welding, and electricity).

Optional Activity or Feedback . . . refers to an item which is not required, but which is designed to **supplement** and enrich the required items in a learning experience.

Resource Person . . . refers to the person in charge of your educational program; the professor, instructor, administrator, supervisor, or cooperating/supervising/classroom teacher who is guiding you in taking this module.

Student . . . refers to the person who is enrolled and receiving instruction in a secondary or post-secondary educational institution.

Vocational Service Area . . . refers to a major vocational field: agricultural education, business and office education, distributive education, health occupations education, home economics education, industrial arts education, technical education, or trade and industrial education.

You or the Teacher . . . refers to the person who is taking the module.

Levels of Performance for Final Assessment

N/A . . . The criterion was not met because it was **not applicable** to the situation.
None . . . **No attempt** was made to meet the criterion, although it was relevant.
Poor . . . The teacher is unable to perform this skill or has only **very limited ability** to perform it.
Fair . . . The teacher is unable to perform this skill in an acceptable manner, but has **some ability** to perform it.
Good . . . The teacher is able to perform this skill in an **effective** manner.
Excellent . . . The teacher is able to perform this skill in a **very effective** manner.

Titles of The Center's Performance-Based Teacher Education Modules

Category A: Program Planning, Development, and Evaluation

A-1 Prepare for a Community Survey
A-2 Conduct a Community Survey
A-3 Report the Findings of a Community Survey
A-4 Organize an Occupational Advisory Committee
A-5 Maintain an Occupational Advisory Committee
A-6 Develop Program Goals and Objectives
A-7 Conduct an Occupational Analysis
A-8 Develop a Course of Study
A-9 Develop Long-Range Program Plans
A-10 Conduct a Student Follow-Up Study
A-11 Evaluate Your Vocational Program

Category B: Instructional Planning

B-1 Determine Needs and Interests of Students
B-2 Develop Student Performance Objectives
B-3 Develop a Unit of Instruction
B-4 Develop a Lesson Plan
B-5 Select Student Instructional Materials
B-6 Prepare Teacher-Made Instructional Materials

Category C: Instructional Execution

C-1 Direct Field Trips
C-2 Conduct Group Discussions, Panel Discussions, and Symposiums
C-3 Employ Brainstorming, Buzz Group, and Question Box Techniques
C-4 Direct Students in Instructing Other Students
C-5 Employ Simulation Techniques
C-6 Guide Student Study
C-7 Direct Student Laboratory Experience
C-8 Direct Students in Applying Problem-Solving Techniques
C-9 Employ the Project Method
C-10 Introduce a Lesson
C-11 Summarize a Lesson
C-12 Employ Oral Questioning Techniques
C-13 Employ Reinforcement Techniques
C-14 Provide Instruction for Slower and More Capable Learners
C-15 Present an Illustrated Talk
C-16 Demonstrate a Manipulative Skill
C-17 Demonstrate a Concept or Principle
C-18 Individualize Instruction
C-19 Employ the Team Teaching Approach
C-20 Use Subject Matter Experts to Present Information
C-21 Prepare Bulletin Boards and Exhibits
C-22 Present Information with Models, Real Objects, and Flannel Boards
C-23 Present Information with Overhead and Opaque Materials
C-24 Present Information with Filmstrips and Slides
C-25 Present Information with Films
C-26 Present Information with Audio Recordings
C-27 Present Information with Televised and Videotaped Materials
C-28 Employ Programmed Instruction
C-29 Present Information with the Chalkboard and Flip Chart

Category D: Instructional Evaluation

D-1 Establish Student Performance Criteria
D-2 Assess Student Performance: Knowledge
D-3 Assess Student Performance: Attitudes
D-4 Assess Student Performance: Skills
D-5 Determine Student Grades
D-6 Evaluate Your Instructional Effectiveness

Category E: Instructional Management

E-1 Project Instructional Resource Needs
E-2 Manage Your Budgeting and Reporting Responsibilities
E-3 Arrange for Improvement of Your Vocational Facilities
E-4 Maintain a Filing System
E-5 Provide for Student Safety
E-6 Provide for the First Aid Needs of Students
E-7 Assist Students in Developing Self-Discipline
E-8 Organize the Vocational Laboratory
E-9 Manage the Vocational Laboratory

Category F: Guidance

F-1 Gather Student Data Using Formal Data-Collection Techniques
F-2 Gather Student Data Through Personal Contacts
F-3 Use Conferences to Help Meet Student Needs
F-4 Provide Information on Educational and Career Opportunities
F-5 Assist Students in Applying for Employment or Further Education

Category G: School-Community Relations

G-1 Develop a School-Community Relations Plan for Your Vocational Program
G-2 Give Presentations to Promote Your Vocational Program
G-3 Develop Brochures to Promote Your Vocational Program
G-4 Prepare Displays to Promote Your Vocational Program
G-5 Prepare News Releases and Articles Concerning Your Vocational Program
G-6 Arrange for Television and Radio Presentations Concerning Your Vocational Program
G-7 Conduct an Open House
G-8 Work with Members of the Community
G-9 Work with State and Local Educators
G-10 Obtain Feedback about Your Vocational Program

Category H: Student Vocational Organization

H-1 Develop a Personal Philosophy Concerning Student Vocational Organizations
H-2 Establish a Student Vocational Organization
H-3 Prepare Student Vocational Organization Members for Leadership Roles
H-4 Assist Student Vocational Organization Members in Developing and Financing a Yearly Program of Activities
H-5 Supervise Activities of the Student Vocational Organization
H-6 Guide Participation in Student Vocational Organization Contests

Category I: Professional Role and Development

I-1 Keep Up-to-Date Professionally
I-2 Serve Your Teaching Profession
I-3 Develop an Active Personal Philosophy of Education
I-4 Serve the School and Community
I-5 Obtain a Suitable Teaching Position
I-6 Provide Laboratory Experiences for Prospective Teachers
I-7 Plan the Student Teaching Experience
I-8 Supervise Student Teachers

Category J: Coordination of Cooperative Education

J-1 Establish Guidelines for Your Cooperative Vocational Program
J-2 Manage the Attendance, Transfers, and Terminations of Co-Op Students
J-3 Enroll Students in Your Co-Op Program
J-4 Secure Training Stations for Your Co-Op Program
J-5 Place Co-Op Students on the Job
J-6 Develop the Training Ability of On-the-Job Instructors
J-7 Coordinate On-the-Job Instruction
J-8 Evaluate Co-Op Students' On-the-Job Performance
J-9 Prepare for Students' Related Instruction
J-10 Supervise an Employer-Employee Appreciation Event

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

Student Guide to Using Performance-Based Teacher Education Materials
Resource Person Guide to Using Performance-Based Teacher Education Materials
Guide to the Implementation of Performance-Based Teacher Education
Performance-Based Teacher Education: The State of the Art, General Education and Vocational Education

For information regarding availability and prices of these materials contact—

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